

Non-Profit Organization Business Planning

Having a solid business plan is essential. It guides the organization's work, and its allocation of its people and financial resources. A solid business plan or similar document is necessary to obtain federal, state, or private funding.

A non-profit organization can no longer just begin operations and anticipate a sudden influx of volunteer and financial support. Those who will support a non-profit with their time, their talents, and their resources expect the non-profit organization to be managed in a similar capacity as a regular business. Good day-to-day management and business practices are an absolute requirement for all non-profits.

Non-profit organizations must make money to continue to fulfill their missions. Without financial profits at the end of every fiscal a non-profit organization will not have funds to begin its next fiscal year. It will not have funds to expand its services and in the long run it will not have the funds to achieve its mission.

The planning for a non-profit organization must be based upon known needs and how the non-profit organization will meet those needs. But it must also include a sound and well thought out business plan that include at least the following:

The Executive Summary must provide an overview of the key points of the non-profit organization's business plan. This summary must be clear, compelling, and complete.

The Mission - Purpose of the organization must be meaningful, it must be powerful, it must be compelling to those who will be asked to help it to fulfill its mission and/or to help support it financially.

The Leadership and Management Team which must be identified and must include: paid leadership, the Board, and influential volunteers.

The Operational Capacity of and the ability of the non-profit organization to successfully respond to unmet needs must be stated clearly stated.

The Description of Service in a clear and compelling way must identify urgent and compelling needs and how the non-profit organization will be meet those needs.

The Marketing Plan must clearly identify: who the non-profit organization serves, known needs, current competitors, and how it will distinguish itself from similar organizations.

The Financial Section must identify known and anticipated financial requirements including: start up financing, how funds will used, and financial management.

Donations and Fundraising must be addressed and clear and realistic goals as well as practical plans must be identified.

NOTE:

This document and information is provided FREE of charge by the Northwest Arkansas Chapter of SCORE. It is provided primarily for use by non-profit (not-for-profit) organizations. However, may be of benefit to other types of organizations. This document is intended to be only a Sample for consideration by Your Organizations paid and volunteer leadership. You may use it, modify it to fit your organization, and for nor charge freely share it with others.